




# SUPPLIER BUYER EXCHANGE

AN ONLINE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN VIRGINIA'S GOVERNMENT PURCHASING PROCESS

## DMBE Certification Process for Small, Women- and Minority-Owned Business Now Expedited

 n July 9, 2007, the Department of Minority Business Enterprise, DMBE, implemented changes that will now

allow small businesses applying for SWaM certification to be issued the designation upon receipt of the printed copy of their signed on-line application and proof of identification. Once received, applicants will have up to 30 days to gather and provide the required supporting documents, which may include proof of ownership, number of employees or gross receipts.

"Typically, a small business will need time to gather the required documents for certification. Even after this exercise, they would still have to wait for our office to review the file," said DMBE Director Stacy L. Burrs. "This process change will help our small businesses

to become eligible immediately to participate in the state procurement opportunities, while ensuring that the SWaM Certification Program continues to be a thorough, credible source of small, women and minority-owned businesses for our state buyers."

Under the new guidelines, if applicants do not submit the required supporting documents within 30 days, the SWaM certification expires. For more information on certification changes, or to identify required supporting documentation, visit the DMBE website at [www.dmbv.virginia.gov](http://www.dmbv.virginia.gov) or call directly at 804.786.5560.

## PUBLIC PROCUREMENT FORUM

Steering a Course to Excellence is the theme of the 19th Public Procurement Forum scheduled for October 28-31, 2007, at the Hampton Roads Convention Center in Hampton, Virginia. Hosted by the Virginia Department of General Services, Division of Purchases and Supply, the Forum brings together public sector buyers and private sector suppliers for education, networking and a products and



services exposition.

Last year's Forum attracted more than 450 public buyers and numerous

suppliers from across the Commonwealth to workshops covering more than 40 topic areas. Workshops focused on eVA, Virginia's total eProcurement solution, and the Commonwealth's Small Women and Minority Owned business program were particularly popular. The exposition offered buyers the opportunity to discuss products and services with 100 suppliers, resulting in many useful contacts for both buyers and suppliers.

Forum 2007 offers an outstanding opportunity for suppliers who want to expand their network of public buyer contacts and learn more about doing business with Virginia. Additional information about the Forum programs and registration can be found at: [dps.dgs.virginia.gov/Forum2007](http://dps.dgs.virginia.gov/Forum2007).

## AUGUSTA COUNTY WINS BIG WITH EVA

From the Department of General Services

In 2003 Augusta County was looking for a way to reach a larger supplier audience with their bids and contracting opportunities. In rural areas, purchasing with public funds can be a real challenge.

"Sometimes it was hard to get the

*continued on p. 4*

SUPPLIERBUYEREXCHANGE is a program of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (VDBA).



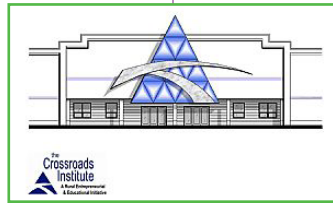
**WWW.VDBA.VIRGINIA.GOV**

## Success Story

### TIM LEWIS IS COOKING UP SUCCESS IN GALAX VIRGINIA

With new spending mandates issued in Virginia by Governor Tim Kaine, small businesses are at an advantage for providing their goods and services to state agencies now more than ever before.

Tim Lewis, owner of Crossroads Café at the Crossroads Institute in Galax, VA and A Servant's Heart Catering Company, is well aware of



the business opportunities that the Commonwealth of Virginia has to offer.

While providing in-house food services to the Crossroads Institute via Crossroads Café, Lewis realized that he had the opportunity and location for potential growth. As a result, he expanded his business ventures to include A Servant's Heart Catering Company, which provides anything from boxed lunches to upscale dining for the Institute's visitors and surrounding areas. Since then, he has learned the value of also expanding his customer base to include state agencies.

In business since August 2006, Lewis immediately registered both family-operated entities on eVA, Virginia's electronic procurement portal, and became SWAM certified with the Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE). Though not the case with every vendor, Lewis says that almost immediately after completing these steps, he began receiving numerous offers for business with state buyers.

"We received our first eVA opportunity before we even really opened, and it was a function worth \$900," he said.

He added that while creating the eVA account for his *continued on p. 4*

## EXPANSIVE VDOT PROJECT TO PROVIDE WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR DBES AND SWAM CERTIFIED VENDORS

In August 2007, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will advertise for work opportunities for the last contract section of its extensive Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project: the Telegraph Road Interchange Project.

The project aims to reconstruct the I-95 mainline from approximately 2 miles west and ½ mile east of Telegraph Road, and will include construction of eleven ramps and bridges, drainage improvements, pedestrian paths, pavement reconstruction, traffic systems, lighting and much more.

According to Carolyn Wolcott, program manager for the Telegraph Road Interchange Project, the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal has not been finalized, but is currently expected to be in the vicinity of 10 percent.

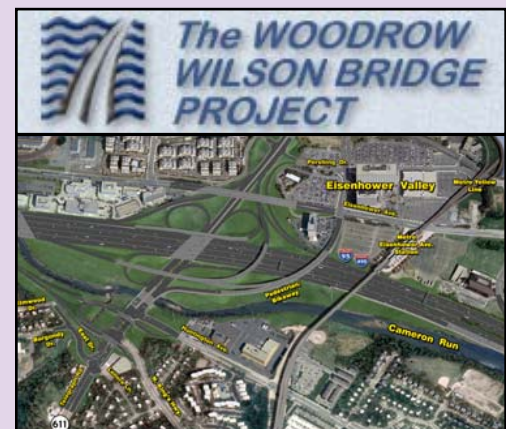
The estimated value of this contract is currently between \$180 and \$200 million.

The Telegraph Road Interchange Project is expected to provide numerous work opportunities for DBEs and Small, Women and Minority (SWaM) certified vendors in the form of subcontract employment. Categories of potential subcontract work opportunities expand over numerous areas including:

- Traffic and safety items (sign posts, roadway lighting, etc.)
- Planting items (mulching and landscaping)
- Protective items (fencing, construction signs, traffic control devices)
- And much more.

As the advertisement date for this project nears, VDOT will prepare two scheduled outreach events in an effort to recruit suitable vendors for the contract.

If you have questions or would like more information regarding Disadvantaged Business Enterprise opportunities on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project, please call 703-329-3433.



## Congratulations to My Lan Tran

### 2007 Virginia and Region III Minority Small Business Champion Of the Year Award U.S. Small Business Administration



**My Lan Tran**, Program Manager for the City of Richmond's Office of Minority Business Development, was awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2007 Virginia & Region III Minority Small Business Champion of the Year Award during the SBA's annual awards luncheon May 18, 2007, held at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond.

Through her work with the City of Richmond, My Lan has worked tirelessly to improve conditions in the minority small business community. One of My Lan's most notable accomplishments is her role

in the development of the city of Richmond's – and state of Virginia's – first Multicultural Business Solutions Center, which, since 2003, has provided opportunities for the region's emerging entrepreneurs to build wealth in the community through the creation of small businesses. The Center is today considered a national model for how to truly diverse U.S. small business development services are.

My Lan's passion for helping minority businesses goes far beyond the City of Richmond's office of Minority Business Development mission statement.

She takes a personal interest in helping diverse, ethnic communities grow in Central Virginia. She volunteers with many organizations that strive to advance multicultural community interests. She is an advisor for the Richmond Export-Import Club, Institute of Supply Management/Richmond District Office, the Business Committee of Colaborando Juntos, Richmond Association for Economics and the Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce: US-China Peoples' Friendship Association, the Heibei (China) – US Professional Association of North American, and other ethnic civic groups.

My Lan Tran, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance congratulates you on this well-deserved award and all your successes!

#### HELPFUL RESOURCES

**Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) - General Procurement Assistance**

1-866-248-8814  
vbic@vdba.virginia.gov

**Virginia Department of Business Assistance (VDBA)**

804-371-8200  
www.vdba.virginia.gov

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804-371-8258  
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**Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) - SWAM Certification**

1-800-223-0671  
(Toll free in Virginia only)  
www.dmbv.virginia.gov

**eVA Customer Care**

1-866-289-7367  
eVAcustomer@vdba.virginia.gov  
www.eva.virginia.gov

#### THE FACTS:

	June 2005	June 2006	Current
<b># of SWaM's Certified</b>	4,165	6,387	Small – 8,524* Woman – 1,804 Minority – 2,876 Total – 13,204
<b># eVA Registered</b>	23,380	28,100	32,834**
<b>% of spending with SWaM Businesses</b>			
Small	9.25	10.36	21.74***
Woman	1.83	2.07	3.79
Minority	2.02	1.93	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.10</b>	<b>14.36</b>	<b>29.53</b>

\* As of 6/25/07 | \*\* As of 5/1/07 | \*\*\* As of 3/31/07

*Augusta County continued from p. 2*

minimum number of quotes required for a purchase," explains Crystal Weller, Augusta County Purchasing Agent.

Crystal was intrigued by the idea of electronic commerce and had been reading about how it allowed buyers "virtual" access to large vendor lists, increased competition, and streamlined purchasing tasks. But the cost of developing a web-based purchasing site, or hiring consultants to do so, was prohibitive.

"Also, a few of my vendors had already joined eVA and had established electronic catalogs. They encouraged me to take advantage of this new easy way to buy from them," she explained.

eVA was designed with local governments and public bodies in mind—to allow smaller entities to benefit from an e-commerce economy of scale. To date, almost 500 local governments and public bodies use eVA for their purchasing. The list includes cities, counties, public schools, fire and emergency services, authorities and more.



"When I found out eVA would be conducting a buyer training class at Blue Ridge Community College in Weyers Cave, I had to go to see what it was all about."

What Crystal learned was that Augusta County could use eVA for no charge. She was so excited by the software demonstrations in the class, she immediately made arrangements

for Augusta County to sign up with eVA as a local government user.

"I couldn't think of a reason not to join eVA," Crystal said. "It was free and it connects me to a vast market of vendors I could never reach myself. Furthermore, I get much better pricing through the increased competition, which saves money for Augusta County tax payers."

Among eVA's purchasing tools, Crystal uses Quick Quote, the Virginia Business Opportunities (VBO) page, and some of eVA's data tracking reports that help manage and analyze purchasing activity.

"I really like the electronic catalogs

that 'punch out' from eVA directly to the vendor's shopping site," she added.

"One of the best things about eVA is the support you get as a buyer," Crystal explained. "eVA Customer Care has given me great support—whether helping with forgotten passwords or showing me how to navigate the site," she said.

Crystal hopes to grow with eVA – eager to eventually have at least one buyer in every county department registered.

For information about signing your locality or public body up with eVA, contact eVA Customer Care at 1-866-289-7367 or visit [www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov).

*Success story continued from p. 2*

businesses, he was very careful to include accurate information, especially for his commodity codes. And judging from the amount of business Lewis still receives, the service that he provides has proved to be a 'hot commodity' among state buyers.

Their most frequent clients include Wytheville Community College, Virginia Tobacco Commission and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

For more information on how you can become eVA registered and/or SWAM certified, contact the VA Department of Business Assistance at 1-866-248-8814.

For more information on the most recent spending mandates as dictated by the governor, you can visit the official website of the Commonwealth of Virginia at [www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/](http://www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/).

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## VDBA PROCUREMENT ASSISTANCE EVENTS

**JULY 17 - RICHMOND**

International Business Alliance

**JULY 19 - HAMPTON ROADS**

Speed Networking, SNI

**JULY 25 - WEBINAR**

Securing IT Contracts in the Commonwealth

**JULY 25 - PETERSBURG**

Selling to the Commonwealth

**JULY 26 - RICHMOND**

Ask the Experts!

**JULY 26 - HAMPTON ROADS**

Doing Business with the State

**AUGUST 7 - ALBERTA**

Entrepreneur Express

**AUGUST 15 - WEBINAR**

Procurement Meets Entrepreneur Express

**AUGUST 16 - ABINGDON**

Entrepreneur Express

**AUGUST 28 - RICHMOND**

Advanced Selling to the Commonwealth

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE,

[WWW.VDBA.VIRGINIA.GOV/EVENTS](http://WWW.VDBA.VIRGINIA.GOV/EVENTS) FOR ADDITIONAL CALENDAR OFFERINGS.